

November 11, 1976

Dr. Mary Ellen Avery
Department of Pediatrics
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Dear Dr. Avery,

Has anyone told the story of the "re"-discovery of lung surfactant from a historical and sociological perspective? I have become rather intrigued by the question of the determinants of the growth of scientific knowledge and discontinuities like the interval between Van Niergard 1929 and Mead 1957 might give us some of the most revealing cases.

If there is no perfect answer to my question, I would still be grateful for any comments or references you might be able to conveniently assemble as an approximation.

If you recall our previous encounters, it will enable me to repeat my regret that this letter needs a postage stamp to be able to reach you (but as soon as I say this I have to be careful that it not be taken as taking anything away from Irv Schulman's outstanding efforts in the role).

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr

POSTS '73